



Missouri Native Plant Society Hawthorn Chapter Newsletter

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March 2006

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The Hawthorn Chapter of the
Missouri Native Plant Society
Newsletter is published monthly.

To be included in future
publications, please send your
articles, art, calendar events,
poems, photos and drawings to:

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Future Activities

March 13: Regular meeting. 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd This will be a slide show of native wildflowers presented by Bob Clearwater of Fairfield Bay Arkansas, father of Vance Clearwater.

March 24: Newsletter items are due.

March 18, 25 and 26: Wildflower-Tree Walks on Audubon properties. See article "Botanical Walks on Audubon Properties" by Jean Graebner inside for details.

March 26 (tentatively): Field trip to the Baskett Area to see the Serviceberry in bloom. We plan to go when the trees are in flower and have a narrow window of bloom time. We will depart at 10:00 am. If you are interested call Paula Peters 474-4225 or Jim Whitley at 442-6929.

March 30: Lunch with Native Plant Enthusiasts! 11:30 am at the Uprise Bakery, 816 Broadway. All are invited.

April 15: Trip to Rudolf Bennett and Davisdale Conservation Areas. Depart MDC on College at 9:00 am.

April 21-23: State Board Meeting – Roaring River State Park, Cassville, MO.

April 23: Earth Day, Peace Park-Downtown Columbia, noon to 5 pm. Please plan to help with the booth (# A5 & A6).

April 28-29: Spring BioBlitz in Columbia. Please consider volunteering, see article by Nadia Navarrete-Tindall inside.

May 6 (tentatively): Trip to see the Shooting Stars and other spring flora in Three Creeks. Call Paula Peters 474-4225 or Jim Whitley 442-6929 if you are interested.

For more information contact Paula at 573-474-4225

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Clearwater to share native plant photos representing a 40-year pursuit

By Jean Graebner

Our March program will be a special “family affair.” Bob Clearwater, father of member Vance Clearwater, will present a program selected from his large collection of photos of native flowers. Clearwater Sr. lives in Fairfield Bay, Arkansas, where he retired from the building supplies sales business. For over 40 years he has been an avid plant photographer, traveling to distant states to pursue his selected target plants in bloom. “He studies to learn what plants are most interesting, possibly rare, and then travels to wherever they are in bloom,” Vance said, adding that “he has thousands of slides.” He has planned a presentation covering his finds in eight to ten states for our program which will be at 7 p.m. Monday March 13 at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd.

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Spring BioBlitz in Columbia

By Nadia Navarrete-Tindall

The Environmental Education Studies of the University of Missouri is organizing their second BioBlitz event to take place on the Flat Branch Watershed on April 28th and 29th, 2006. Last fall, I led a native plant survey walk to do a preliminary inventory of plants observed along the MKT trail and surrounding areas. Cheryl Jensen, Jerry Van Sambeek, and other volunteers helped with the survey. We identified just fewer than 200 plants including 20 to 25 non-native species. For more information on this year’s event read the website <http://bioblitz.missouri.edu/>.

It is very important that other members of the Native Plant Society participate in this event so we can produce a more complete inventory and possibly have more than one tour. This year, all the tours will include experts in several wildlife disciplines such as birds, insects, and reptiles in addition to plants. Target audience is Columbia residents, adults, and children.

BioBlitz organizers are looking for people who can help to identify fungi, since the MKT is very rich in fungi. If you would like to volunteer with the native plant survey, please send an email to navarreten@missouri.edu or call at 234-2088 or contact Sara Storrs at bioblitz@missouri.edu

Collaborative projects at Rock Bridge attract butterflies and educate residents

By Nancy Brakhage

Members of the Hawthorn Chapter and the local Wild Ones! chapter established and maintain a flowerbed at Rock Bridge State Park. The mostly native plant bed is a popular place for butterflies when the plants are in bloom. The grasses and flowers in the bed were chosen for nectar, beauty, and adaptability to the site. To find the free standing bed, use the upper entrance to the park. It is at the Hickam log cabin near the park headquarters building.

The Columbia Garden Club established and cares for the beds surrounding the cabin. The Lawn Company established the rectangle of lawn on the north side of the cabin. It emphasizes natural care through thoughtful selection of grass type and using alternatives to pesticides and other chemicals.

These projects were put together in 2001 to demonstrate to homeowners that the way their lawns are managed affects the quality of the water in our streams. An interpretive sign at the edge of the lawn outlines and explains best management practices. Collectively the projects are called “The Watershed Friendly Lawn Demonstration Site”. Its purpose is to educate about non-point source pollution produced from lawn care practices and how to change it. The Bonne Femme Watershed Partnership developed the project. It is one small part of many accomplishments of the Partnership, but the lesson is important. Lawns cover a large part of our landscape and storm water from them eventually carries pollutants to our streams. Funding for the Partnership has ended, but if you want to get involved, new grants are in place and others are continuing efforts to protect our local watersheds. There are many opportunities to volunteer. In the county contact Terry Frueh, Bonne Femme Watershed Project, www.cavewatershed.org/ (this site has additional contact information). For Columbia and the Hinkson watershed contact Scott Hamilton, scott.hamilton@mdc.mo.gov., www.helpthehinkson.org.

If you would like to view other native plant beds established in the Columbia area by Wild Ones!, they are located at the entrance and at the divergence of the trail at the Forum Nature Area; along the trail at Ebbets Field south of the tennis courts; and at the Capen Park composting site.

December 2005 State Board Meeting Minutes

By Nadia Navarrete-Tindall

Dunn-Palmer Herbarium on December 3, 2005.

Members present: State Board and Chapters representatives. Hawthorn Chapter: Nadia Navarrete-Tindall replacing Judy Turner, Kansas, City- Sue Hollis. St. Louis-Martha Hill, Osage Plains-Marlene Miller, and Ozark-Pat French.

This was a short meeting and started at 9 am. Several members brought sweet treats and Robin Kennedy, our hostess at the Herbarium, provided warm beverages. The agenda was very ambitious. There were 29 items to discuss; however, due to weather conditions, Rex Hill President, motioned to try to finish the meeting at 12 p.m. to avoid possible bad weather for members driving back north in Missouri. We all agreed that it was a good idea so Chapter representatives were allowed to discuss only 1 item from their report (our report was prepared by Judy Turner).

Among the highlights of the minutes, Rex Hill introduced and welcomed Kevin Bley, the new publicity chairman for the society, he said that he would like to hear from all members of all chapters for ideas to promote our society; George Yatskievych, requested papers for the *Missouriensis* to be published this year; the awards committee lead by Jack Harris is asking for nominations for different awards (see Nov-Dec. 2005 Petal Pusher for details), I agreed to help Jack. Chapter representatives discussed their one item: I talked about our successful participation at the Chestnut Roast in New Franklin in October. Following this brief participation, we discussed a tentative schedule of events for 2006 and additional field trips. Noteworthy events are: Edible plants and mushrooms workshop at Meramec Community College on April 29; Powell Gardens spring gardening festival on May 5-7; Spring Wildflower sale at Shaw Nature Reserve on May 13; Native Plant Field Day at Bradford Farm on June 3. Additional information will be published in coming issues of the Petal Pusher.

Large showing for Nelson's Terrestrial Natural Communities of Missouri

By Jean Graebner

More than 50 people attended the joint meeting of Hawthorn Chapter and the Columbia Chapter of Audubon in the sanctuary of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd., Wednesday evening February 15. They heard Paul H. Nelson discuss his classic reference book, ***Terrestrial Natural Communities of Missouri*** and how the new edition extensively revises the earlier version first published in 1985.

The book is widely considered to be a "must have" for anyone who wants to understand Missouri's existing natural communities. Nine natural communities are identified: Forest, Woodland, Savanna, Prairie, Glade, Cliff/Talus, Stream Edge, Wetland, and Cave. Each receives extensive treatment including descriptions, maps, history, changes brought about both naturally and by various cultures.

"Over the past two decades, 'The Nelson System' became the standard for inventory, assessment and tracking of Missouri's best remaining examples of its landscape diversity," writes Richard Thom, Wildlife Diversity Chief with the MDC, in a preface.

After his presentation, Dr. Nelson had books on hand for sale and also signed copies.

Botanical Walks on Audubon Properties

By Jean Graebner

Some dates have been set for the Wildflower-Tree Walks that are a result of the on-going plan of cooperation between our members and the Columbia Audubon Society to help inventory the plants on their properties. Bill Clark, Audubon president, who has spoken at several of our meetings asking for this cooperation has appointed a liaison group to coordinate the activities: Vanessa Melton, chairman; Jack Beckett, Jean Graebner, Mariel Stephenson and Denny Donnell.

The first walk will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 18 at the Albert Area and will follow a workday in the morning and lunch at a restaurant. It is not necessary to attend earlier events. Meet at the back of the parking lot at Patricia's at 2 p.m.

The next scheduled walk will be at 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 25, at the Russell Property. Entrance is at the northern dead-end of Cunningham Drive. Cunningham Drive may be reached by going South on Fairview Road to Bray just south of Fairview School, and turning West on Bray Avenue. Meet at the gate to the property located at the dead-end.

A walk has also been scheduled for Sunday, March 26, at Wild Haven. Meet at Patricia's at 8:30 a.m. to car pool or meet at Wild Haven Natural Area at 9 a.m. Directions to this area: Take Route B north to Route HH. Follow HH east about two miles then, after a 90-degree turn to the north, look for the turnoff for O'Rear Road on the left. Turn onto O'Rear Road, cross Hinkson Creek, go past the first driveway on the left and look on your left for the sign and gate for the Wild Haven shelter. Park on the grass near the shelter.

In addition to compiling some vital information about the botanical resources, the walks should be a great opportunity for those wanting to sharpen their botanical skills and/or do some plant photography. Call Vanessa at 573-864-3905 for further information and if you plan to attend any of the walks.

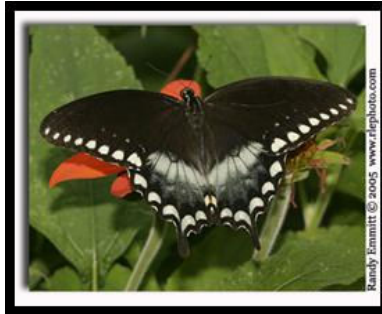
Is Spicebush a Tiny Red Avocado?

By Nadia Navarrete-Tindall

Well, sort of. . . For those of you who are familiar with both, avocado (*Persea Americana*) and spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) may find it interesting to know that both trees belong to the Lauraceae family and are very important sources of food for a variety of wildlife. However, while avocado is only found in tropical to subtropical climates (it was first introduced from Mexico in 1871 to Santa Barbara, California), spicebush and sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), another member of the same family, can be naturally found in temperate and subtropical climates. Avocado can reach up to 120 feet in natural areas and spicebush can only reach 18 feet. Wild avocados provide important food and cover for the resplendent quetzal and other wildlife of Central America. Spicebush and sassafras offer foliage for food and cover for caterpillars, especially the 'spicebush caterpillar'.



Splendid Quetzal



Spicebush caterpillar

The ¼ in. long fruits (or drupes) are showy bright-red and are consumed by birds and small mammals. Spicebush naturally grows in woodlands or forest openings usually in soil moist conditions. It can be planted under full sun to moderate shade in gardens. It can be easily grown from seed after a period of cold-moist-stratification or from cuttings collected in summer.



Spicebush loaded with fruits in October

It is also available from local native plant nurseries in Missouri.

Rabbits and deer love spicebush so it is a good idea to protect seedlings until their top branch is out of their reach. I use tall tomato cages to protect our bushes.



Spicebush seedling

In Missouri, we also have *Lindera melissaefolia* or pondberry, which is a federally endangered species. Pondberry requires more shade and it is much smaller than spicebush, reaching up to 6 feet. In Missouri, pondberry is only found in Sands Pond Natural Area and Conservation Area in Ripley County. Maybe we should all go visit it!

Selected reference: Shrubs and woody vines of Missouri. Don Kurz.

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